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ABSTRACT

Recommendations are presented from a "blue ribbon" committee formed to review and modify the Statement of Mission and Statewide Priorities of the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges. The first sections present the members of the commission and provide a background to the committee's deliberations. Next, committee recommendations are highlighted, including the decision not to attempt to resolve governance issues; the suggestion to remove the word "priorities" from the Board's statement of mission; the proposal to include words (e.g., "will", "should", and "may") to indicate a sense of priorities regarding programs and services; and the addition of two new categories for associate degrees and general education. Next, unresolved issues are presented, including the way in which the community colleges' responsibility for access should be described, and whether to enumerate particular types of discrimination in the Board's non-discrimination statement. Finally, the original and recommended mission statements of the Board are presented, focusing on the statewide mission; community college access; and programs and services in the areas of transfer education, associate degrees, certificate programs, general education, joint programs, remediation and basic skills education, continuing and community education, and community and student services. (HB)

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Board of Governors of the
California Community Colleges
October 27-28, 1983

Item 12

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Title: Statement of Mission and Statewide Priorities

Presentation: Al Villa, Vice President, Board of Governors
Chair, Blue Ribbon Committee on the Statement of Mission and
Statewide Priorities

Summary

The Board's Blue Ribbon Committee on the Statement of Mission and Priorities has completed its work and presents, in this item, its recommendations for modifying the Statement.

At the inception of its work, the Committee agreed to exclude matters pertaining to governance from the Statement. It is understood that this area will be covered by the work of a Commission on Governance.

Among major changes to the Statement recommended by the Committee are a new title, referring only to "mission," and a reworded preamble which focuses on how the statement can be used to aid the Board in carrying out its legal responsibility for leadership and advocacy.

The "priorities" of the original statement would be restructured as "functions." The sense of priority is maintained, however, by stating that districts "will" perform certain functions while they "should" or "may" perform other functions.

The Blue Ribbon Committee has worked conscientiously since last May and should be commended for completing a most difficult task. The Committee achieved consensus on all recommended changes to the statement, except for two points. These two points, appearing in the section on access, are submitted to the Board of Governors without Committee recommendation.

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Background

At its January meeting, the Board of Governors endorsed a staff proposal for further review and modification of the Board's Statement of Mission and Statewide Priorities. A "blue ribbon" advisory committee was appointed by the President of the Board, Jim Tatum, to assess field reactions to the Board's draft and to suggest possible modifications.

Appointees to the Blue Ribbon Committee on Mission and Priorities were:

Al Villa, Board Vice President and Chair of the Blue Ribbon Committee
Agnes Robinson, Board member
Marie Brown, Coordinator of Financial Aids, Los Angeles Mission College
Wallace Hall, Secretary, California State Legislative Committee, American Association of Retired Persons
John T. McCuen, Superintendent/President, Long Beach Community College District
Richard J. Sneed, Vice President of Academic Affairs, Santa Ana College
Judith Strattan, Dean of Students, MiraCosta College
Sheila Swanson, Board member
Maryamber Villa, Instructor, Los Angeles Valley College
Mary Wallace Wheat, Trustee, Foothill-DeAnza Community College District
Richard Whiteman, Dean of Vocational Education, Cerritos College

The Committee met three times to develop its recommendations. Its approach at the first meeting was to work from the Board's Working Draft dated October 29, 1982, revising that draft for clarity, accuracy, and appropriateness. At each subsequent meeting, the Committee worked from a staff draft which incorporated Committee revisions from the previous meeting.

By the final meeting, four issues remained:

1. Should the word "priorities" be used in the title and to identify the section listing programs and services?
2. Should the functions listed under Programs and Services be arranged in order from required functions to allowable functions?
3. Should the Access section of the document emphasize the open admission policy by referring to it as a "unique historical" responsibility or state the responsibility without the descriptive words?
4. Should the Statement describe the commitment to non-discrimination in general terms or by identifying specific types of discrimination?

The Committee reached consensus on all recommended changes, except for two points: (3) describing the access responsibility and (4) the need for listing specific types of non-discrimination. These points, discussed more fully below, are presented to the Board without Committee recommendation.

The complete text of the Board's Statement, as the Committee proposes it be modified, appears in the Appendix.

Committee Recommendations

Preamble. References to the governance relationship between the Board of Governors and the local boards of trustees are minimized. Major questions regarding governance were raised by the Board of Governors' 1982 Working Draft Statement. The Committee decided that its deliberations would be unduly complicated if it attempted to resolve governance issues. A better forum for such work would be a group charged expressly with dealing with governance by delineating the respective roles of the Board of Governors and the local district boards of trustees. By removing governance from the scope of its work, the Committee eliminated a major stumbling block to its progress.

Changes to the Statement's preamble also focus on the legal mission of the community colleges and certain of the Board's responsibilities. The proposed preamble would end by describing the use of the Statement, i.e., "...to assist the Board in carrying out its responsibilities for leadership and direction."

Priorities. Letters from the colleges expressed confusion over use of the word "priorities" in the Board of Governors' October 29, 1982, working draft. Did the word priorities mean the Board's own priorities or did it establish priorities for the college districts? Did the sequence in which the Board listed programs and services imply they were in order from most important to least important?

The Committee's effort to clarify these issues resulted in recommendations that the word "priorities" be removed from the Statement's title and that the section listing community college programs and services be retitled from "priorities" to "functions." The order in which this section now lists the categories follows simply from the section's title. Various community college programs appear first, followed by community and student services.

While the word "priorities" is removed, the sense of priority is retained by using such words as "will," "should," and "may" when describing how districts provide the programs and services that fall within the community college mission. For example, although listed last, student services "will" be provided by community college districts. This wording also eliminates the need for the confusing footnote that appears in last year's Statement to indicate that some functions were not viewed as statewide priorities.

Programs and Services. New wording recommended by the Committee restructures the program categories for transfer and occupational education and adds two new categories for Associate Degrees and General Education so that the description is complete. Other changes include an expansion of the offerings that districts may provide under Continuing and Community Education and minor editing of the remediation and student services descriptions.

Unresolved Issues

Access Responsibility. Consensus was reached by the Committee on a modification to the reference, under "Access," to evaluation of student readiness. However, Committee members left unresolved the issue of whether to identify the community colleges' commitment to open access as a "unique, historical" responsibility. The position of those who want the descriptive words in-

cluded speaks for itself. Those on the Committee who prefer to exclude these descriptors are of the opinion that all public educational institutions share essentially the same responsibility for open access.

Non-Discrimination Statement. Committee opinion was divided as to whether specific types of discrimination should be enumerated in the Access section of the document. Some Committee members thought that a general statement was better while other Committee members preferred the emphasis that is added by listing types of unfair or illegal discrimination.

Summary

The recommended Statement for the Board of Governors represents the work of an outstanding group of community college personnel. Meetings of the Committee were characterized by frank discussions. Specific input from all segments of the community colleges was collected and reviewed. The Committee should be commended for completing a difficult task in an open and very constructive forum.

Changes to the Statement recommended by the Committee are, of course, subject to debate. In the Chair's judgment, however, these changes clarify the purpose of the Statement. (Uncertainty about the Statement's purpose clouded its acceptance and use last year.) In addition, the revised Statement is more complete and more accurate than last year's version.

The proposed Statement should serve those looking to the Board for an expression of the state's interest and priorities. Besides providing this direction, the Statement should serve as a useful basis for problem-solving, policy analysis, and planning. Therefore, the Statement should help the Board provide the leadership for which it is responsible in the continuing development of California community colleges.

BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE
CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

STATEMENT OF
~~MISSION AND STATEWIDE PRIORITIES~~

STATEWIDE MISSION

~~The Board of Governors recognizes the existence of a California system of community colleges which are open door institutions. The Board affirms that the system is one of shared governance with the boards of trustees of the 70 community college districts.~~

The Board of Governors reaffirms the role of the California community colleges as open door institutions in keeping with the tradition of the colleges and in keeping with the provisions of the California Master Plan for Higher Education. This statement on the mission and statewide priorities for community colleges is designed to assist the Board in carrying out its role as described in Education Code Section 71023:

"It is the intent of the Legislature that the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges shall provide leadership and direction in the continuing development of community colleges as an integral and effective element in the structure of public higher education in the state. The work of the board shall at all times be directed to maintaining and continuing to the maximum degree permissible, local autonomy and control in the administration of the community colleges."

Also underlying this statement is the intent of the Master Plan for Higher Education that public community colleges offer instruction in programs that may include but shall not be limited to:

"standard collegiate courses for transfer to other institutions; vocational and technical fields leading to employment; general or liberal arts courses; and community services"

and be authorized to grant the associate degree.

The Board recognizes that the strength and vitality of the California community colleges derives from the fact that, within a framework of state planning and leadership, local boards of trustees have the responsibility to administer colleges in accordance with local as well as statewide needs.

~~*The Board recognizes as a primary responsibility the setting of statewide priorities and ensuring that these priorities are incorporated in the plans of local districts with district responses to them evaluated by the Board of Governors.*~~

The Board recognizes as a primary responsibility the setting of statewide priorities and ensuring that these priorities are incorporated in the plans of local districts with district responses to them evaluated by the Board of Governors. In this way, the statewide mission statement can be used for evaluation and planning and to assist the Board in carrying out its responsibilities for leadership and direction.

~~Shared responsibility in the promotion of educational excellence and system accountability is a commitment of the Board. It intends to work with the districts to supplement this initial statement of statewide priorities and to develop appropriate accountability methods. In achieving these objectives articulation with other segments of postsecondary education, the high schools, and with private business, labor and government is essential.~~

~~Working together, the Board of Governors and the local community college districts shall effectively communicate to the public their commitments to quality preparation of students for advanced study, for gainful employment, and for responsible citizenship. To these ends the Board of Governors calls for statewide collaboration in comprehensive planning and evaluation of program quality and student outcomes.~~

STATEWIDE PRIORITIES

ACCESS

~~Admission to California community colleges is open to adults of all ages who can profit from instruction in courses deemed appropriate for community colleges as set forth in the California Master Plan for Higher Education. The community colleges have special responsibility to provide programs that ensure equal access to postsecondary education for all adults without regard to race, ethnic or national origin, sex, age, disability, or prior educational status. In carrying out this responsibility, individual enrollments in specific courses and programs are to be determined by evaluation of student readiness and willingness to learn. Objective student outcome evaluations are to be used to ensure accountability of community colleges in achieving instructional excellence and program balance.~~

ACCESS

Admission to California community colleges is open to adults, high school graduates and others as identified by law who can profit from community college instruction. The community colleges have (unique, historical) responsibility to provide open admission, (without discrimination, to all adults, high school graduates and others as identified by law) OR (without regard to race, religion, ethnic or national origin, sex, age, disability, sexual orientation, or prior educational status).

In carrying out their responsibility for access, colleges should promote academic standards and student achievement by appropriate assessment, placement, and follow-up activities, as well as program evaluation.

NOTE: The mission committee had a tie vote on the wording in ().

FUNCTIONS

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

~~TRANSFER EDUCATION It is the position of the Board of Governors that the community college is the institution of first resort for students who are not yet ready academically, personally, or economically to begin undergraduate education in four year colleges and universities. Community colleges are particularly appropriate for fully qualified students who prefer to begin undergraduate education in their own communities.~~

~~Community college districts will provide transfer programs of high quality leading to associate degrees and which are carefully and continuously articulated with senior institutions and the high schools.~~

Transfer Education

Community college districts will provide transfer programs which are carefully and continuously articulated with collegiate institutions and the high schools.

Associate Degrees

Community College districts will provide associate degrees in vocational-technical programs and liberal arts programs.

~~Preparation for Employment. Preparing citizens for gainful employment is an essential mission of the California community colleges. This function has the following components:~~

~~Two-year vocational/technical programs leading to AA/AS degrees which include essential skills and general education;~~

~~Short term certificate programs leading to early employment, and for continuing/reentry education; and (See Certificate programs)~~

~~Joint programs with business, industry, labor and government (such as Joint Apprenticeship, CWETA, Investment in people, cooperative work experience, and contract instruction). (See Joint Programs)~~

Certificate Programs

Community college districts will provide certificate programs leading to early employment, and for continuing re-entry education.

General Education

Community college districts will provide courses designed to contribute to associate degree programs and/or designed to broaden knowledge, skills and attitudes, to develop analytical ability and critical thinking and to foster interest in life-long learning in the educational, scientific and cultural fields essential for effective participation in a complex society.

Joint Programs

Community college districts are encouraged to participate in joint programs with business, industry, labor and government.

~~Student Support Services: Providing guidance and support for students is an essential function of community colleges. Among the most important services are:~~

~~Guidance and other assistance in matters of financial aid, placement, and program selection;~~

~~Academic and career counseling, and monitoring students on probation; and~~

~~Articulation with high schools and senior institutions; and coordination with the colleges' instructional programs. (See Student Services)~~

~~Remediation: Relevant programs of remediation should be required for all students needing preparation for successful learning in community college level courses and programs. These may include:~~

~~Well designed developmental programs for students with deficiencies in learning skills;~~

~~Remediation for special learning problems; and~~

~~Probation and counseling to help students in severe academic need.~~

Remediation and Basic Skills Education

Community college districts should provide remedial and basic skills education for students needing preparation for community college level courses and programs. These may include:

remedial courses for students with educational deficiencies

developmental courses and/or programs for students with special learning problems

ongoing diagnostic/prescription programs providing for individual student skills needs

~~Continuing and Community Education: This function includes effective response to such state and local needs as:~~

~~Adult basic education;~~

~~English as a second language;~~

~~General education;~~

~~Education for citizenship~~

~~Personal development; and~~

~~Parenting and family support.~~

Continuing and Community Education

Community College districts may provide non-credit classes which respond effectitvely to the following state and local needs pursuant to Education Code Section 84711:

parenting, including parent cooperative preschools, classes in child growth and development and parent-child relationships, and classes in parenting.

elementary and secondary basic skills and other courses and classes such as remedial academic courses or clases in reading, mathematics, and language arts.

English as a second language.

citizenship for immigrants.

education programs for substantially handicapped persons.

short-term vocational programs with high employment potential.

education programs for older adults.

education programs in home economics.

health and safety education.

~~Community Services: Community colleges respond to unique local needs by offering:~~

- ~~*Avocational courses;~~
- ~~*Recreational courses;~~
- ~~*Community and civic development, and~~
- ~~*Community and civic center functions.~~

~~*
The Board of Governors recognizes that these courses and activities have special relevance to local community college districts although they are not viewed as statewide priorities.~~

Community Services

Community college districts may respond to unique local needs by providing locally supported:

avocational courses

recreational courses

community and cultural events

community and civic center functions

Student Services

Community college districts will provide student services to meet identified needs of student development which may include:

assistance in matters of admissions, financial aid, and job placement

diagnostic testing, evaluation and monitoring of student progress

academic, career, and personal counseling as related to the student's education

articulation with high schools and collegiate institutions

student activities

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